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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 715

Offered February 2, 2021

Commending Valerie Braxton-Williams.

Patrons—Bagby, Adams, D.M., Avoli, Ayala, Bulova, Byron, Carr, Cole, M.L., Convirs-Fowler, Davis, Delaney, Gooditis, Guy, Guzman, Hayes, Heretick, Hope, Hurst, Jones, Keam, Kilgore, Kory, Levine, Marshall, McGuire, McQuinn, Mugler, Murphy, O'Quinn, Plum, Rasoul, Reid, Roem, Runion, Rush, Scott, Sickles, Simonds, Subramanyam, Torian, Walker, Ware, Watts and Wyatt; Senators: Barker, Bell, Boysko, Deeds, Hanger, Howell, Morrissey, Reeves and Spruill

WHEREAS, Valerie Braxton-Williams, a longtime public servant who recently served as the Confidential Assistant for Policy and Legislation to the Virginia Employment Commission, retired in 2021; and

WHEREAS, Valerie Braxton-Williams was born in Richmond as the fourth of six children and was reared in a close-knit Christian family that instilled in her a strong work ethic and the importance of caring for and helping others; and

WHEREAS, Valerie Braxton-Williams was educated in Richmond Public Schools, graduated with a bachelor's degree from Virginia Union University, and completed graduate studies for a certification in exceptional education from Virginia State University; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from Virginia Union University, Valerie Braxton-Williams became an educator in Richmond Public Schools and over the course of her career taught fifth grade, remedial reading, students with learning disabilities, and the gifted and talented program; and

WHEREAS, from 1999 to 2014, Valerie Braxton-Williams continued her public service as legislative assistant to former Senator Henry L. Marsh III and concurrently served as a consultant and advisor to attorneys and staff in his law firm, Hill, Tucker and Marsh; and

WHEREAS, as a legislative assistant, Valerie Braxton-Williams aided in the development of notable legislative initiatives to address criminal justice reform, disparity in health care, public safety, and public and higher education; and

WHEREAS, Valerie Braxton-Williams championed community improvement activities, such as implementing a program to provide computers and computer training to students in underserved communities; further, she enthusiastically provided numerous opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to learn, experience, and understand the legislative process; and

WHEREAS, Valerie Braxton-Williams is dedicated to civic engagement and gave her time, talent, and resources to the Richmond Crusade for Voters and the Richmond branch of the NAACP; she is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and a citizen member of a subcommittee to the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission; and

WHEREAS, a member of Mount Olive Baptist Church in Glen Allen, Valerie Braxton-Williams is vice chair of the Civic Ministry and volunteers with the Food Service Ministry for congregant and community events; and

WHEREAS, Valerie Braxton-Williams was appointed as the Confidential Assistant for Policy and Legislation to the Virginia Employment Commission by Governor Terence R. McAuliffe and was reappointed by Governor Ralph S. Northam; and

WHEREAS, in this role, Valerie Braxton-Williams ensured compliance with state and federal laws, collaborated with colleagues to secure funding for United States Department of Labor initiatives, represented the agency on various task forces, served as the primary liaison for legislative offices, and spearheaded activities for employee engagement; and

WHEREAS, in response to the unprecedented number of COVID-19-related constituent inquiries, Valerie Braxton-Williams worked tirelessly, amassing long hours even on Saturdays and holidays, to assist local, state, and federal legislative offices in addressing the concerns of the citizens of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, on January 1, 2021, having faithfully and diligently executed her responsibilities as public servant for 46 years, Valerie Braxton-Williams ended her service to the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Valerie Braxton-Williams, a respected public servant who most recently served as Confidential Assistant for Policy and Legislation to the Virginia Employment Commission, on the occasion of her retirement; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Valerie Braxton-Williams as an expression of the General Assembly's high esteem

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55 and admiration for her extraordinary contributions to the Commonwealth and best wishes for a long and
56 fulfilling retirement.